

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
November 30, 2017

PRESENT: Mayor Elizabeth White and Council members Ari Bernstein, Liz Homan, Jackie McSwiggan, Steve Sasso, Jim Strauch, and Amy Wilczynski (arrived at 7:30 p.m. after roll call was completed)

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Ray Wiss
Municipal Clerk Anne Dodd

A Work Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale was held in the Municipal Building at 500 West Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ on November 30, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Elizabeth White who asked that the Municipal Clerk read the open public meetings statement:

“In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. The meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting, are posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building, published in the Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to the Ridgewood News and Star Ledger.”

Public Comment:

John Dreyer, 6 Butternut Road, requested that the governing body consider the possibility of implementing property tax abatements as people are not investing in their homes due to the resulting increase in property taxes.

Borough Attorney Wiss advised that Mr. Dreyer’s request is most likely out of the municipality’s jurisdiction, noting that New Jersey is property tax dependent.

Mayor White stated that this topic can be discussed by the Land Use Committee as well as with the Tax Assessor.

Borough Attorney Wiss expressed his belief that this issue would become multi-jurisdictional as both school and County taxes are raised municipally.

Administration:

A. Agenda Review

Mayor White reviewed the Regular Session agenda. She advised that the November 16th Work and Regular Session Minutes are listed for approval.

Mayor White explained that Ordinance 17-16 pertains to the use of solid waste containers and is scheduled for adoption this evening. In terms of Ordinances 17-18 through 17-20, Mayor White noted that all three ordinances resulted from recommendations from NJ DEP as to revisions needed to allow for a wildlife management program. These ordinances have been reviewed and approved by the Public Safety Committee, Land Use Committee, the Borough Attorney, and the Chief of Police.

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Mayor White then reviewed the resolutions on the Consent Agenda. She highlighted Resolution #17-284 and explained that this resolution authorizes updates to the Borough's field use policy. These updates were reviewed by Facilities, Park and Recreation Committee as well as the Allendale Sports Association.

Mayor White advised that her report as well as Council Reports would be moved to after the discussion on the letter to the County regarding Wildlife Management.

C. Council Reports – Public Safety

1. Discussion on Letter to County Re: Wildlife Management

Mayor White explained that, over the years, residents have come to the Council meetings to speak about wildlife issues and the management of wildlife. She noted that the governing body has met with the County on numerous occasions to seek assistance as well as attended seminars on how to address this issue. Over the past four months, numerous residents have expressed serious concerns regarding wildlife management. As a result, a letter has been drafted by the Public Safety Committee, and circulated to members of the governing body, to request assistance from the County Executive.

Councilman Sasso noted that concerns from residents are increasing and getting louder. He commented that addressing this issue without a partnership with the County will not produce the same result. The purpose of this letter is to formally request the County's assistance. Councilman Sasso added that he walked the Celery Farm with a wildlife biologist from the NJ DEP and she advised that action is needed as the Celery Farm could be a field in a generation due to old trees dying and new trees being eaten.

Councilwoman McSwiggan advised that members of the Fyke Association have expressed concern for years over ground dwelling animals losing their habitats in the Celery Farm. In addition, she commented that this issue has allowed for invasive species. Councilwoman Wilczynski added that flooding issues, economic issues for Rohslers Allendale Nursery, and health issues with an increase in incidents of Lyme disease have also resulted.

As there were no comments or concerns raised with respect to this letter, Mayor White advised that it would be sent and followed up with a phone call and meeting. In terms of the three ordinances scheduled for introduction, she commented that these revisions are minor and do not implement a wildlife management program.

B. Mayor's Report

Mayor White reported that she and Councilwoman Wilczynski attended the Allendale/Saddle River Rotary Club meet and greet last night at the Allendale Bar & Grill. She noted that they are looking to increase membership and commented that they do really wonderful work.

Mayor White will be attending the 19th Annual New Jersey Supportive Housing Conference tomorrow to accept the 2017 Municipal Housing Award for Supportive Housing. She commented that this award is a great honor for Allendale as the special needs residents are loved and have had such a positive impact on the community. She credited the entire community for helping Allendale to achieve this award.

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The last Department Head meeting of the year took place this morning and Mayor White remarked that it was a great meeting.

C. Council Reports

Councilman Strauch – Public Works

Councilman Strauch reported that the Public Works and Engineering Committee met last Monday and it was a productive meeting. Leaf collection continues and is going well. December 4th begins the last week of leaf collection for the west side of town and December 11th for the east side. Councilman Strauch thanked Mike Limatola for doing an excellent job of keeping residents aware of the requirements and he thanked residents for their cooperation in following these regulations. Three tons of asphalt were picked up to complete pothole repairs. Rich McDowell and Ray Frazier of the DPW did a wonderful job putting the wreaths up in the downtown shopping area as did Borst with the planters. The DPW will be working with the Allendale Police Department during tomorrow night's Holiday Walk celebration to ensure that everything goes smoothly.

Due to time constraints, the remaining Council Reports were carried to the Regular Session.

D. Staff Reports

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was carried to the Regular Session.

E. Correspondence

There were no correspondence items.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilwoman McSwiggan, second by Councilman Sasso, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Dodd, RMC
Municipal Clerk